

Message Text

PAGE 01 BONN 15715 302208Z

67-S
ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /031 W
----- 118420
O 302055Z OCT 73
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8414

S E C R E T BONN 15715

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS DEFENSE DEPARTMENT AND APPROPRIATE
COMMANDS

E.O. 11652
TAGS: PFOR, XF, GW
SUBJECT: LOADING OF ARMS FOR ISRAEL

1. STATE SECRETARY FRANK CALLED ME TO THE FOREIGN OFFICE THIS EVENING TO SAY THAT AMBASSADOR VON STADEN, IN REPORTING HIS CONVERSATION EARLIER TODAY WITH SECRETARY OF DEFENSE SCHLESINGER, HAD TRANSMITTED THE LATTER'S REQUEST THAT A US FREIGHTER NOW AT BREMERHAVEN BE PERMITTED TO LOAD MATERIALS FOR ISRAEL. TO DO THIS IT WOULD FIRST HAVE TO DISCHARGE ITS PRESENT CARGO, AND PERMISSION SO FAR WITHHELD BY THE GERMAN AUTHORITIES WOULD HAVE TO BE GRANTED TO MOVE THE SPECIAL TRAIN (PRESUMABLY THE ONE LOADED WITH 75,000 ROUNDS OF 105 MILLIMETER AMMUNITION SITTING AT KAISERSLAUTERN) NORTHWARDS TO BREMERHAVEN. FAVORABLE GERMAN ACTION IN THIS URGENT CASE WOULD NOT PREJUDICE THE SETTLEMENT OF THE BASIC ISSUE OF ARMS SHIPMENTS FROM THE FRG TO ISRAEL.

2. FRANK SAID THAT ON THIS UNDERSTANDING HIS GOVERNMENT WAS PREPARED TO AUTHORIZE THE SHIPMENT IN QUESTION AND, THROUGH THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT, WAS ISSUING APPROPRIATE INSTRUCTIONS BOTH TO THE RAILWAY AND PORT AUTHORITIES TO PERMIT THE RAIL MOVEMENT AND LOADING TO PROCEED. THE FRG DID EXPECT,
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HOWEVER, THAT UTMOST DISCRETION WOULD BE OBSERVED TO PREVENT ANY PUBLICITY WHICH WOULD ONLY LEAD TO MORE EMBARRASSMENT. IF THE PRESS DID GET ON TO THE STORY, THEN BOTH THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT AND THE US AUTHORITIES SHOULD

TAKE THE LINE THAT THIS WAS A PERFECTLY NORMAL AND ROUTINE SHIPMENT ON AN AMERICAN VESSEL OF A KIND THAT REGULARLY GOES IN AND OUT OF BREMERHAVEN WITH NO MENTION OF DESTINATION. HE HOPED THAT THE AMERICANS, INCLUDING MILITARY POLICE, WHO MIGHT BE INVOLVED IN THE OPERATION WOULD SO CONDUCT THEMSELVES AS TO AVOID DRAWING ATTENTION TO THEIR ACTIVITIES.

3. AS TO THE MORE GENERAL QUESTION OF POSSIBLE FUTURE SHIPMENTS FROM THE FRG, FRANK SUGGESTED THAT A JOINT AND SECRET GERMAN-AMERICAN WORKING GROUP BE CREATED IN BONN TO INCLUDE EMBASSY REPRESENTATIVES AND ON THE GERMAN SIDE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, DEFENSE MINISTRY, TRANSPORT MINISTRY AND OTHER APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES. THIS WORKING GROUP WOULD CONSIDER THE WHOLE PROBLEM WITH A VIEW TO ARRIVING AT AGREED SOLUTIONS.

4. I SAID I WAS GRATIFIED AT THIS LATEST DEVELOPMENT WHICH I WOULD REPORT IMMEDIATELY TO WASHINGTON, AND EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE PROPOSED WORKING GROUP WOULD PROVE A USEFUL INSTRUMENT.
HILLENBRAND

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDEE.

SECRET

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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